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Don't Accept Counterfeit

Walking out of a grocery store one day, a man called me over to his car. Even though I had never met him before, he had my curiosity because he had his trunk open. By the way he was acting, I wondered if he had a dead body or drugs in the back of the car. Soon he was explaining to me how important it was for me to purchase a purse for my beautiful wife and it just happened that he could offer me a fantastic discount on name brand purses. It turns out that he had come across an overflow of beautiful purses that he could sell to me at low bottom prices. I was pretty nice to him as it was clear that he had counterfeit purses, replicas of the real name brand purses and not the real thing and that's why he could sell them cheap.

I'm writing to you today with an encouragement and a warning for your life and for mine. First, I want to encourage you that God has a great plan for your life, and He desires for you to make an impact before you get to heaven. His plan for you will take you through every battle into victory and strength. The warning for you and I is not to accept a counterfeit life and not to lower our expectations on the promises of God for our lives.

You might say to me, "But why would I ever do that, I want to have everything that God wants for me." I am bringing this up because, even with the best intentions of living a life for God, it can become very easy for any person to accept a counterfeit life. The devil is a master trickster; he is the master of misdirection, confusion, frustration, lying, and enticing people off of the course God has for them onto something that is similar looking in every way. If he can't stop us from going to heaven, he will design a plan to get us off course in our life to become less effective for God.

If you think about it, a counterfeit purse for my wife looks almost identical to the real one. I personally couldn't tell the difference, and from a distance, they all look the same. Yet, even though the fake version does the same job as the real thing, it doesn't cost near as much and is easier to own, even though it is not the same quality.

If we are going to accept the real walk with God into His perfect will then we must also accept that there is a price we must pay to have the real thing. I doubt if any believer honestly plans to choose a lesser path than God's perfect will, but it has happened all through the Bible and history. Even in the very beginning Adam and Eve were convinced to walk away from God's instructions. They, of all people, should have known better.

To the church of Galatia, the Apostle Paul corrects an entire church for accepting a teaching that was going to take them away from God. *"I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed."* Galatians 1:6-8

It wasn't an enticement of sin that drew them away, but it was a religious lifestyle that was offered to them. An entire group of believers was convinced to accept a perverted gospel that looked the same. Paul continues to call it as being charmed away from them as similar to witchcraft "*O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?*" *Galatians 3:1* They were deceived into accepting a counterfeit path that seemed right and Godly but yet was going to take them to a different end. This was an entire group that was led away, leaders and followers.

The problem with being deceived is that you don't know you are deceived. People have given their lives for things they believed to be true but were completely false according to scripture. We are warned in *Colossians 2:8* "*Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.*" This leads me to repeat the warning of being deceived. Perhaps you have fallen for something or someone in the past. I have accidentally tried to purchase something with a counterfeit hundred dollar bill before only to feel angry when I found out I was deceived and robbed. A life full of good deeds and good works in the name of God can be as off target as a life of dysfunction and struggle. The only difference is in struggles; you might have an idea you are off target.

Under deception, you think, feel and believe you are right, and what a shame to live your life thinking you are in the will of God only to discover that you were not on His path. I can foresee many people shocked to find out in heaven the truth of their lives lived on this earth. Praise the Lord that He has not left us with only our own wisdom and understanding to discover what is true or false. *John 16:13* says "*However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.*"

He has not left us to wander through life on our own hopelessly, but He has given us a perfect Helper to save us from missing the mark that God has set for us. A perfect path that will never fail us. We are not alone in walking with God. There is no battle, obstacle, or question that God does not have the answer for. He has asked us to become a partner with the Holy Spirit to allow Him to faithfully lead our steps to embrace the real deal of walking with Him, a real life of impacting the world His way and not our own way. We never need to fear the counterfeit when we are joined to the Spirit of Truth!

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